

The Three Amigos – Vigilantes – Chapter 1 – Missy

Moon Shadows consists of 39 single-family homes. The 2-story between Patti's and Sharon's home had turned over so many times, no one could remember how many people had lived in it. A while before Gary had tried to breathe himself to death, the place had sold again. Hispanic family this time. A short time later, a second family had moved in. The folks put their garbage can at the curb on two successive Fridays, but Waste Management won't pick up your garbage if you haven't signed up. They quit trying and started a garbage collection in the backyard.

Then Gary had ended up in AV Hospital for 8 days and had lost interest. During the early part of October, Patti had been by and visited. Patti isn't quite as nosey as Darlene, but she kept herself well informed. She knew about the garbage. She'd also watched them mowing their lawn. Seems like they didn't know what their property line was and had mowed some of Chris and Patti's lawn, cutting off a sprinkler head in the process. But, they apparently figured they hadn't because when they turn on their water to water the lawn, it worked fine. Patti had to replace her sprinkler.

The folks had 3 dogs that they were dog sitting for someone else, or so they claimed. The dogs had tunneled under the fence and had tried to attack Sharon. Sharon knew about dogs and escaped without getting mauled. Called the Sheriff and they called Animal Rescue. Every time Animal Rescue showed up, the neighbor's would board their mutts with Jose on the corner and Animal Rescue stopped looking for the dogs. This was before AV hospital. The new neighbors said they just wanted to get along with everyone in the neighborhood. Well, they sure had a good start, didn't they?

By the first of October 2004, old Gar-Bear was doing pretty good. He'd run out of the 4mg Amaryl diabetes medicine and didn't have the \$125 to fill the script. It sure was expensive these days just staying alive. Dr. J had given him some Starlix at one time and old Gar-Bear decided to self-medicate his uncontrolled blood sugar using the drug. Dr. J was big on the stuff, but Dr. J didn't always think clearly. Starlix stimulates the pancreas to produce more insulin. Say, didn't they cut out half of Gary's Pancreas on August 13, 2003 at USC during a Whipple procedure? Doc's name was Mateo wasn't it? Type II Diabetes is not a failure of the Pancreas to secret insulin; it's a resistance of the body to use the insulin produced.

Of course, Gary's Pancreas was pretty screwed up after almost 40 years of drinking and it didn't really produce all that much insulin. Then, they went and cut out half of it, half of his stomach and a foot of intestine in that Whipple Procedure. Gary had begun to fail a few months later and had ended up insulin dependent. That fixed everything, for a while. Hell, his was maintaining his weight at 170, had his blood sugar under control and life was good. Gary had self-diagnosed chronic bronchitis and had been right. Mentioned it to Dr. J at one time or another, and Dr. J wrote COPD in the chart and never said a word, just left Gary guessing.

Steadman's says that chronic means a health-related state, lasting a long time. The

Mayo Clinic Family Health Book at page 929 says, "There are three chronic lung disorders in which obstruction to the flow of air out of the bronchial passages is a prominent symptom. In one, chronic bronchitis, there is a persistent inflammation of the lining of the bronchial passages commonly, but not always associated with obstruction to the outflow of air. Another, emphysema, is characterized by swelling of the air sacs (alveoli) and destruction of the walls between them; there is almost always some degree of bronchitis associated with emphysema, and chronic obstruction to the outflow of air is prominent. Physicians often refer to emphysema and chronic bronchitis as chronic obstructive lung disease (COLD) and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). In the third disorder, asthma, allergic factors are mainly responsible. Obstruction to the outflow of air is intermittent, occurring in 'attacks,' and is a consequence of spasm of muscles encircling the bronchial tubes."

Well, why not? Gary had just one more chronic condition to add to his long list of disorders. Hey, light up another cigarette, smoking doesn't hurt you. Have another drink, booze doesn't always get the liver, it sometimes takes out the pancreas instead. Hang on while I light up another KOOL. Nicotine is one of the most addictive substances known to man did you know that? Physically and psychologically. 30 some years of booze and 46 years of smoking had left our amigo in sad shape. He wasn't complaining, he enjoyed smoking but didn't miss the booze. What goes around comes around. In AV Hospital, the diagnosis was asthma. And Gary knew he had a little emphysema, so he was batting 1,000, he had all 3 of the COPD diseases. Emphysema is fun, ask Gary's late mother. She ended up in a nursing home on oxygen 24/7. When she wanted another cigarette, she'd take off the cannula, walk to the smoking room and have a smoke. Got so the last 2 months, she'd stopped smoking because she couldn't walk the 10' anymore. Some people are stupid and some must work at it, maybe like Gar-Bear.

"Hey partner, what's up?" Gary called out of his window when Ron got out of the car. "Coffees on and here I am, see you in a minute."

Ron got his coffee, laced it with sweet and low and joined Gary.

"What's that stink?" Ron asked. Gary related the story about his new neighbors.

"Are they legal or illegal?" Ron asked.

"Got me," Gary replied. "Who can tell in California, all the Latinos always speak Spanish instead of English."

"Did you ever think of calling the Health Department?" Ron asked.

"Told Sharon and Patti to, but they'd rather complain," Gary explained. "And I'm not going to call them, can't really smell it anyway. Say there Ronald, I just finished reading the first 70 pages of 'Soul Forge'."

"Sounds like a bad disease," Ron chuckled.

"It's the name of the novel Derek wrote in Kosovo," Gary explained, rather put out. "I thought I could half-assed write. Like I told Derek, Them can does, them that can't teach. I'm going back to teaching. My son, the author. Hell, it's better than 'The Lord of the Rings'."

"Who won?" Ron asked.

"Hell, I don't know," Gary replied, "I've only read the first 70 pages."

"So what are you going to do about your neighbors?" Ron asked.

"Nothing. I can't smell it," Gary replied.

When Ron got home, he put in an anonymous call to the Health Department. He suggested that they check out the backyard of a home located at 4554 Moonraker Road. There seemed to be a major health hazard, he'd said and it was darned serious. The Health Department sent out some red-necked peckerwood to check on the report. Seems that the guy really had it in for Latinos. He found a pickup load of garbage piled in the backyard. He wrote up the citation and pounded on the door. Some Babe came to the door and out spewed a flurry of Spanish. Well now, that inspector No Habla and he just handed her the ticket. When he got back to his office, he called the INS. Told them there was a bunch of illegals living at 4554 Moonraker Road in Palmdale.

INS showed up and determined that the folks weren't illegals. But the damage had been done. The guy assumed that Gary or Sharon had called the Health Department and the INS. He was po'd, let me tell you. He let his dogs out, then took the handle from a broken shovel and went pounding on Gary's door. He'd walked right past Gary sitting in his office, failing to notice him. Gary, being the prudent man that he was, got that Sauer from his sock drawer and stuck it in his back pocket. The man was pounding on the front door. Gary opened the door a crack.

"Can I help you?" Gary asked.

"Where the hell do you get off calling the Health Department and the INS?" the neighbor asked.

"I didn't call anyone," Gary truthfully protested.

"Then your wife did," the neighbor insisted.

"Sharon, did you call the Health Department and the INS on our neighbors?" Gary called out.

"Wasn't me dear," she replied, "Maybe it was Patti."

The fella must have heard because he tore off in a hurry, headed for Chris and Patti's. Sharon called Patti to warn her and Gary sort of trailed on behind at a discreet distance. Man did the same thing at Patti's house. Patti gave him one of those 'get real looks' and told him no one in their household had called anyone, but that he'd better get rid of the garbage or she sure and the hell was going to. She also told him that he owed her a sprinkler. And then, she went to point out that these were single-family homes and that Palmdale ordinances prohibited 3 families from living in one house. You know how Patti sometimes goes overboard, right?

Well now, the man became enraged. Didn't do anything, just headed home, but you could see he was enraged. Gary beat feet home before the guy confronted him again and put the gun back in the sock drawer.

12:15am...

Gary was in a pretty deep sleep from the Xanax. Then came the Crash and the sound of breaking glass. He sat up, shook out the cobwebs and got the Sauer from the sock drawer. The Sauer was loaded with one up the pipe and replacement rounds in the mag. The gun was double action and in that state, all you needed to do was pull the trigger. It seems that the safety didn't function unless you cocked the weapon. Gary stumbled to the office, gun in hand, and flipped the light switch. The front window was smashed in and there was glass everywhere. He flipped on the hall light and headed down the hall just as the front door crashed in. Missy immediately barked.

Missy is a Bichon Frise. She's less than a foot tall and fat. She's so friendly that the worst you risk is getting licked to death. She stood up on Sharon's lap and barked at the neighbor, saying "Hi."

The neighbor was pretty drunk and he didn't know about Missy. He swung that shovel handle and killed her right there on Sharon's lap. Gary was just rounding the corner and he saw the guy raise the shovel handle to strike again. He pulled up the Sauer and put one right between the guy's eyes at a range of about 8'. Sharon was sitting there wide eyed and crying. Gary checked on Missy and she was gone. Now, Gary's German was up, but he restrained himself and didn't shoot the SOB again. He called 911.

The patrol cars poured into Moon Shadows like it was 9/11 all over again. They grabbed Gary's gun from the table and cuffed him. Then, they took Sharon to her quilting room and questioned her.

Between tears, the story came out. Sharon and Missy were asleep in the recliner, she said. There was a busting of glass and Gary had gotten up and turned on the light to the office. She could only assume that he'd gotten his gun from his sock drawer. Next, the hall light popped on and she assumed that Gary was coming to the living room. About that time, the front door burst in and Missy, the dog, had stood up and barked "Hi." That dead guy swung the shovel handle and killed Missy right there on her lap. Then, she said he raised the shovel handle again as if to strike either Missy a second time or her.

One of the Deputies doing the questioning was one of the Deputies who'd been out on the dog call, way back when. He asked her what, if anything, had happened today to set things off and she recounted the earlier events to the best of her memory.

Gary told the cops that he was sleeping when he heard breaking glass. He'd assumed that someone was breaking in and had grabbed his Sauer from the sock drawer. He'd turned on the office light and seen the broken window. He flipped the hall light switch next to the office switch and had turned on the hall light and had headed down the hall. Then, he said, he'd heard one bark from Missy, his dog, followed by a yelp. He'd rounded the corner just in time to see the neighbor raising the shovel handle to strike his wife. He said that he didn't even think about it, he just raised the Sauer and had fired to protect Sharon.

He'd gotten lucky and put one right between the guy's eyes, saving his wife's life. Then, he said, he'd called 911. They asked him what, if anything, had happened today to set things off and he recounted the earlier events to the best of his memory. And, all the while Gary was sitting in his rocker, recliner, swivel chair, holding Missy and rocking her with the tears streaming down his face. And, that's no mean feat with your hands cuffed behind your back. Sharon had thoughtfully laid Missy on Gary's lap.

The cops then did the switch bit and had the two of them repeat the entire story. A sympathetic Deputy had taken the cuffs off Gary so he could hold Missy. Gary wasn't going anywhere and he posed no danger. I mean really, he was sitting there in his jockey shorts and t-shirt. Gary and Sharon retold their stories. Apparently they jived and apparently they'd told both groups of Deputies the same thing. The Deputies asked Gary if he had any more guns and they'd recovered the Sterling Saturday Night Special from the sock drawer along with the spare mag for the Sauer. They weren't going to arrest him at the moment, they said, because it appeared to be a justifiable homicide. Gary had shot the neighbor protecting Sharon's life. However, if the DA disagreed, they'd be back. Gary didn't really care one way or another, someone had killed his baby and he'd killed that SOB back.

And, somewhere in the process, Gary's mind had snapped. Missy, AKC registered name Precious Mystique, was as much one of Gary's children as Damon, Derek, Amy or Lorrie. Gary hadn't been thinking about the events of that night when he'd answered the Deputies questions. His replies were rote; what he was thinking about was avenging Missy's death. In his troubled mind, he was going to get every illegal alien he could find and kill them. But first, he had to take care of Missy.

When Ron and Linda heard about the problems at Gary and Sharon's, Ron had a guilty conscience for what he'd started. He went to the Halley Olsen Funeral Home and had gotten a child's coffin. He showed up at Gary and Sharon's and they laid Missy in the coffin and buried it in the backyard. And they prayed over the coffin and Ron filled the hole back in. Chris came down and took some sod from the neighbor's front yard and sodded over the spot where the coffin was buried. It had been their call to 911 that the Deputies had responded to because the neighbor had hit their house first.

The Three Amigos – Vigilantes – Chapter 2 – The Quest

Gary was sitting at his computer surfing the web. He had put up the topic Illegal Aliens and was following the Yahoo links when a Patrol Car pulled in and parked.

“Guess they’re coming to arrest me for murder,” Gary thought.

The Deputy was carrying a brown paper bag and that didn’t make any sense whatsoever. Gary hoofed it down the hall and pulled the door open just as the Deputy reached for the doorbell.

“Gary Olsen?” the Deputy asked.

“Yes sir,” Gary replied.

“May I step in?” the Deputy asked.

“Awfully darned polite for someone come to arrest me,” Gary thought.

“Yes sir,” Gary replied and stepped back.

The Deputy walked to the kitchen and asked, “May I sit down Mr. Olsen? I have quite a story to tell you.”

“Yes sir,” Gary replied and sat down too.

“Your weapons are in the paper bag Mr. Olsen,” the Deputy began, “Unloaded of course. Do you always keep you weapons loaded?”

“Yes sir,” Gary replied.

“Why would you do something like that Mr. Olsen, it is dangerous and foolish,” the Deputy commented.

“Deputy is your gun loaded?” Gary asked.

“Of course it is,” the Deputy replied.

“Why?” Gary asked.

The Deputy explained the obvious to which Gary replied, “That’s my answer, too, Deputy. No one was ever killed with an unloaded gun. I keep all of my guns loaded at all times. What is the sense of having a gun if it isn’t loaded?”

The Deputy left that one lying on the table. “Do you believe in God, Mr. Olsen?”

“Yes sir,” Gary replied.

“Maybe that explains it,” the Deputy said. “A young eager beaver Assistant DA pulled the case and he was hot to trot to prosecute you. You must know how these things go in LA County, right?”

“Yes sir,” Gary replied.

“I think it was 50/50, by the way,” the Deputy added. “Anyway, that eager beaver young DA got overruled and you are not going to be prosecuted. Darnest thing I ever saw.”

“Did you really think that guy was going to hit your wife with that shovel handle?” the Deputy asked.

“To be perfectly honest Deputy,” Gary replied, “I didn’t think. He was there and she was there and he was raising up that shovel handle like he was going to strike her and I just shot.”

Say, you do know that Missy was a female, right? She who? She, Sharon or she, Missy? It is called a latent ambiguity, ask a lawyer. The other kind is called a patent ambiguity. The lawful use of deadly force is extremely limited. California has the retreat law. That means that if you catch the burglar in the act, you have to retreat from harm’s way, unless of course he has a gun and tries to shoot you. Then, in that nanosecond, you are allowed to pull out your unconcealed weapon and shoot him. Anyway I think it is something like that, but I’m not a lawyer. Doesn’t matter, I’m not giving legal advice. And the cops NEVER give guns back, but, it’s my story.

After the Deputy left, Gary opened the paper bag. Everything was there except his ‘bullets’. He called Ron and told him to pick him up, they needed to go to Big 5 and buy a box of .22LR and a box of .32 auto. Now Ron was still feeling pretty bad about Missy. He liked her too. He was there in 20 minutes and they drove down to Big 5. As it happened, Gary had a pocketful of cash. The neighbors had taken off until the fuss settled down and Gary had stolen and sold their furniture. Got \$275 for the whole houseful. Big 5 had Mossberg shotguns on sale for \$219.95. Gary didn’t like the Mossberg, but it had a short barrel and magazine extension. He bought the shotgun and the ammo. Since he had to wait to pick up the shotgun, he figured he would get shotgun shells at that time.

“You’re awfully quiet ever since that night,” Ron observed, “What is going on in that head of yours?”

“An old Klingon saying, Ronald,” Gary replied. “‘Star Trek 2, The Wrath of Khan’ where Khan says, ‘Do you know the Klingon proverb that tells us revenge is a dish that is best served cold?’”

“I remember,” Ron says, “So what.”

“That thing killed Missy and I am going to take it out on every illegal alien I encounter,” Gary explained.

“Patti says they weren’t illegal aliens,” Ron pointed out.

“Yeah and they’ll probably be back looking for their furniture, too,” Gary chuckled. “Guess I’ll just have to tell them that a burglar got it but I couldn’t shoot because he didn’t have a gun.”

“Why didn’t the burglar have a gun?” Ron asked.

“Because I left it home in my sock drawer,” Gary said.

“You misunderstood, Gar-Bear,” Ron replied, “I asked why the burglar didn’t have a gun, not why you didn’t have a gun.”

“Same answer, Ronald,” Gary half smiled. “Anyway, it was petty theft, I only got \$275 for the whole houseful.”

“I wondered where you got the money for the shotgun,” Ron replied dryly.

“So, are you going to help me hunt down and kill illegal aliens?” Gary asked.

“You out of your gourd?” Ron replied. “I told you they weren’t illegal aliens.”

“I have my own definition for illegal alien,” Gary said. “An illegal alien is anyone who is breaking a law. Not the little stuff, the big stuff. For instance, let’s say we see a carload of gang bangers doing a drive by shooting. As far as I am concerned, that’s alien to what I believe in and since what they did was illegal, they are illegal aliens and I’m going to kill them, right then and there.”

“How many times did you watch *Death Wish*?” Ron asked.

“Just call me Paul Kersey,” Gary said. “Didn’t quite wear the tape out.”

“You can’t wear a tape out,” Ron said.

“I’m on a DVD of *Top Gun*,” Gary said. “Wore out 2 tapes.”

“What about *In Harm’s Way*?” Ron asked.

“Say, do you know where I can get a new copy?” Gary asked.

“Of what?” Ron asked.

“I forget,” Gary said.

“Why did you really kill that guy?” Ron asked.

“Because he had his shovel handle raised and was going to hit her,” Gary explained.

“Hit who?” Ron wanted to know, he’d heard Gary’s lecture on latent v. patent ambiguities.

“Her,” Gary repeated. Gary wasn’t born on a turnip truck either.

“How come you know more than me about movies?” Ron asked. “Do you subscribe to the Movie Times or something?”

“Nah,” Gary said, “It’s free.”

“Well, if we’re going to hunt illegal aliens,” Ron said, “We’d better get prepared.”

“You can’t say that,” Gary snapped.

“Why not?” Ron asked.

“Because, I’m the preparedness freak and that’s my line,” Gary retorted.

Ron and Gary were sitting in the Palmdale Group before the 9:30am meeting while the previous conversation occurred. Oh, did you think they were in the car? Sorry. Clarence walked in.

“Hi Ron. Hi, Gary,” Clarence greeted them. “How are you boys today?”

“Hi Clarence,” Ron said.

“Gary, I’m awful sorry to hear about the trouble you had,” Clarence offered.

“Wasn’t no trouble, Clarence, I got him right between the eyes,” Gary replied.

“What’s he talking about Ron?” Clarence asked.

Ron took a few minutes and filled Clarence in on the death of Missy, the shooting and all that had happened since the last time Clarence had seen Gary. Clarence had been referring to Gary’s being in the AV Hospital. He explained that to Ron. Ron then explained how Gary had to get out of the hospital to stay alive. For example, on 10/7/04, he, Gary, had breakfast, lunch and dinner. Just before dinner, his blood sugar should have been over 200 if he had been following doctor’s orders. However, his blood sugar was 73 and his BP was elevated. 134/67, according to Ron. Clarence said that was good and Ron said it was to kill for; however, Gary had claimed that anything over 110 over 60 was elevated. Ron then told Clarence that Gary was going to start hunting down

illegal aliens and kill them. Clarence was pretty excited until Ron provided Gary's definition of an illegal alien.

"Count me in," Clarence said, "Gary was awful good to Fred before he died and I know he loved that dog of his."

"Cripes," Ron said, "You are as crazy as he is."

"I didn't buy that dog of his no darned coffin," Clarence responded.

"Ok, I'm in too," Ron agreed, "But this is going to end up bad."

"Why, Ron?" Clarence asked, "The way Gary defined an illegal alien, it ought to be ok. It's still murder, but if some of the bad guys got taken out before they had a chance to celebrate, maybe it would help the crime problem."

After the meeting, Gary went home and got on the computer. It was darned hard work to locate the sites of crimes in LA, but he persisted. Remember, we're not talking the average robbery here unless someone got killed. There were more than enough killings in LA on a daily basis to keep The Three Amigos busy. Man, what if they lived in Washington, DC? A week later, Gary had sort of a map. He'd put in a red pin for every homicide. There seemed to be 3 main areas: the Valley around Van Nuys, South Central and East LA. After the meeting Clarence had gone to Big 5 and bought himself a Mossberg shotgun too. Guess whom he ran into?

"Hi, Ron," Clarence said, "What are you doing here?"

"Buying a shotgun Clarence," Ron laughed, "The same as you."

"Don't much care for the Mossberg myself," Clarence said.

"Me either," Ron admitted, "But they're cheap and if we have to, we can throw them away."

"Why would we want to do that?" Clarence asked.

"Ballistics evidence," Ron explained.

"I could be wrong Ron," Clarence said, "But I don't think you can get much ballistics evidence from a smooth barreled shotgun unless you leave the used shells lying."

One of the guys was right and one of them was wrong. What do you think? Who is right, Ron or Clarence?

The Three Amigos – Vigilantes – Chapter 3 – Forensic Evidence

Clarence was right. Personally, I don't believe it.

“The forensic pathologist works with other branches of the forensic sciences. The forensic pathologist may collect evidence from the body such as blood and hairs in an assault case, swabs for examination for semen in rape cases, and fibers from the decedent's clothing and body. These are sent to the forensic laboratory for examination by a criminalist – a scientist trained in the collection and examination of physical evidence. The forensic pathologist also collects specimens, such as blood, urine, bile, as well as stomach contents and body tissues, for toxicology analysis. The toxicologist looks for the presence of alcohol, drugs, and other chemicals or poisons in these specimens. If bullets, shotgun pellets, or wadding are recovered at autopsy, they are also sent to the forensic laboratory for examination. A firearms examiner analyzes these specimens and is often able to match them to a specific gun.”

The trick is in reading the last sentence. 'Often'? Does that include a smooth bore? Ah, you say, but what about the wadding? Ties the wadding to a specific lot of shotgun shells. But what about that improved cylinder choke? The Three Amigos bought a cylinder bore shotgun. How many shotgun shells are there in any specific lot? 100? 1,000? 10,000? Maybe it would be a good idea if The Three Amigos only bought those 5 round boxes and got rid of the leftover shells. Gary loved *CSI*, by the way. And, he bought Safeskin gloves by the box.

Say were you expecting some sort of tirade against illegal immigrants? I didn't see the word Immigrant in the title. Remember what they called Paul Kersey in the movie? *The Vigilante*. That's what this story is really all about Vigilante Justice. And was it really about the late Missy? Or, was it about the lawlessness that grips this country? Sneaky, huh? “Virginia City, Montana was (literally) a lawless town. A group composed largely of Masons, Republicans and Northerners formed a secret society of Vigilantes. They strangled (“hung” is not accurate) mostly non-Masonic Democrats with Southern sympathies. Later, probably fearing prosecution, these men had three books written to argue their case, and they also founded the Montana Historical Society, probably for the same purpose. Montanans and citizens of Virginia City, Montana are loud and adamant that the Vigilantes were necessary in order to free the area of the highwaymen. Strong measures were required because the Sheriff was the secret leader of the Road Agents. Evidence points elsewhere. Sort of. Please look at all the evidence and help us find more.”

“In 1892, 161 lynchings were reported. It is anyone's guess how many actually took place. Between 1880 and 1930, nearly 4,000 Americans met their grisly end at the end of a rope, and in almost all those instances, vigilantes were responsible.

“But the history of vigilantism in America goes far beyond the racially-motivated hangings that plagued the South in the years after the Civil War. It is in fact an integral part of our culture that has left its mark on the nation. VIGILANTES ventures back to the pio-

near days to tell the story of the men who helped dispense justice on the lawless frontier, and reveals how the vigilantes themselves were responsible for many crimes. Then, trace the long battle that finally led to the passage anti-lynching laws. Hear from a man who survived an attack in 1930, and see extensive archival footage from the NAACP collection that documents the cruelty and injustice that was long accepted by society.

“From the organized force that patrolled Gold Rush San Francisco to the hate-fueled crimes that left a bitter legacy that lingers to this day, this is an extraordinary look at VIGILANTES in America.”

“Now, as to the new activities: The administration of justice is, in every nation, a state monopoly; that is, countries do not allow citizens to take justice into their own hands, to engage in self-help when they have been the victims of a crime, because governments recognize that to allow this invites anarchy. Historically, those who have taken justice into their own hands – often known as “vigilantes” – were prosecuted for what they did; the prosecution typically takes the form of charging the vigilante not with the distinct offense of vigilantism but for the crimes he committed in the course of “doing justice.” A “real world” vigilante might, for example, be prosecuted for murder, for assault and or for kidnapping, since, whatever the motivations responsible for these acts, he is not lawfully authorized to administer justice and cannot, therefore, use force against someone who has violated a nation’s penal laws.”

Gary got Ron to take him to pick up his new shotgun. Gary bought 1 5-round box of slugs and 1 5-round box of 12-pellet 00 buckshot. Seems like Ron had a shotgun to pick up, too. And, then, in walked Clarence, to pick up his shotgun. Gary told them no more than 1 5-round box of each type of shells per person from Big 5. And he confirmed Ron’s suspicions about markings on the shell casings. Gary loved to watch forensic shows on TV. Before they left, Clarence agreed to spend a day in LA, getting 3 5-round boxes of each type of shell from every store he could hit. Ron said he’d hit the AV stores. Gary also told them that no matter how tempted they might be, never, ever touch the shells without wearing rubber gloves.

Clarence set off the next day with a big box of rubber bands to keep the purchases separate. Ron used paper lunch bags for the same purpose. They pooled their cash and gave most of it to Clarence to spend in LA. The first *Death Wish* movie was made in 1974 and the last in 1994. Charles Bronson starred. Without looking, how many movies in the series? The movie’s tagline was “Vigilante, city style – Judge, Jury, and Executioner.” The plot summary says, “Paul Kersey, New York Architect, is a bleeding-heart liberal whose world is suddenly torn apart by the murder of his wife and the rape of his daughter. After a vacation to Arizona, Kersey returns to New York with a vengeance against crime, and takes to vigilantism.” My kind of guy. Say, maybe that’s why I make cops out to be good guys. They kept catching Kersey, but always let him go. Five movies, BTW.

Gar-Bear’s plan was simple, yet exceeding complex. He’d identified the high crime are-

as in LA, those would be the targets. Who would ever expect three old geezers of such high crimes and misdemeanors? The LA cops? Probably, they didn't seem to like anyone and every time you turned around, they were beating up some poor black guy and making the evening news. NY City has maybe 15,000 cops to cover an area much smaller than LA. LA has about 7,000. At the police academy, they must teach chokeholds and 'proper' use of the baton, ask Rodney King. Enough sentimentalism.

The Three Amigos pooled some more money and bought a beat up, non-descript Toyota. It took Chris one hell of a long time to get it the way they wanted it. Why Chris? Chris built racecars. By the time Chris finished, the only thing on the junker that wasn't aftermarket was the shift lever. And, high performance engines really sound like they're running rough have you ever noticed? The car wouldn't pass even the most casual look under the hood, but why would anyone want to do that?

“LIMA, Peru (Reuters) – Indian peasants burned alive a man accused of stealing a gas canister in the latest outbreak of mob justice in Peru's remote southern Andes.

Alejandro Noalca, 54, was taken to hospital and died hours later on Wednesday night, a hospital spokesman said on Thursday. Only the soles of his feet were burn-free.

Chilling television pictures showed townsfolk tying him to a lamppost, beating him and pouring gasoline over him out of soda bottles, apparently after a town “trial.”

Noalca was later seen staggering away from the lamppost after his bindings burned through, but a woman poured more gasoline on him and the crowd set him alight again. Police later took him to a hospital in an ambulance.

Percy Choque, the mayor of Azangaro where the incident happened, told Peru's CPN radio this was the eighth killing at the hands of a mob this year. Locals say these parts of Peru's highlands are largely forgotten by the state.

The attack happened in the department of Puno, where a mob of Aymara Indians in the town of Ilave stoned to death a mayor accused of corruption in April. Across the nearby border in Bolivia, another mayor suffered a similar fate in June.”

Vigilante justice can go too far, as has been proven time and again. In Charles City, Iowa eons ago, a mob yanked a guy out of the jail and hanged him. It was later proven that he was innocent. And, then came Esposito and Miranda. Suddenly, the bad guys had more rights than their victims. In response, states passed the 3-strikes laws, filling the prisons. Then, they couldn't build prisons fast enough. “Opened as the first federal prison for women in 1927, Alderson sits on 95 acres and houses 1,055 female prisoners, according to the Bureau of Prisons spokeswoman. Inmates double up in rooms equipped with bunk bed, locker, desk and chair.”

(CNN) “Camp Cupcake”, how appropriate for a cooking show host. On 12/31/97, Camp Cupcake held 682 prisoners. Martha would probably have to share a bedroom. Say,

maybe we have a problem in the US. And Charles Bronson had died of pneumonia in 2003. One little fib! How much do you suppose it's going to cost to put up the diva for 5 months? Was it really worth it? How much did that show trial cost the US taxpayer? Well, it doesn't pay to lie to the feds. Now, murder is a different matter. Kill someone and you have more rights than your victim.

And, what about the guy they executed in Texas. Wasn't there some sort of problem with Houston's DNA lab? Oh, that's right, he confessed and never recanted. Said he was sorry right before they executed him, didn't he? Ruined the day for a whole bunch of people opposed to the death penalty. What death penalty? You could die of old age waiting on death row. And what if the killer committed the crime the day before his/her 18th birthday. Guess that makes them a minor when they committed the crime huh? We'd better not execute someone who was a minor when they committed that crime. What, the victim was only 8? That's different, the age of the victim isn't important.

There are different preparations one makes depending upon what one is planning to do. You buy generators and flashlights if you want to survive, but maybe a shotgun if you're looking for vengeance. And powder-free textured latex exam gloves and ammo at different stores. And you soup up a Toyota because it might just be the least recognizable car in California. And then, just to really confuse the scenario, you go out and commit your first crime right down the street. What crime? Why you steal 3 more identical shotguns from Big 5 and use them to do the dirty deed, that's what crime. Having done his internship at White Memorial Hospital in Bakersfield, Gary had been taught about donning and removing latex gloves. So naturally, the preparations involved teaching Ron and Clarence the right way to do even that. And after they'd learned that, they put on gloves and wore them when they wrapped a strip of red tape around the stocks of the stolen shotguns. You wouldn't want them to get confused and use the wrong gun, right?

Oops, guess they forgot to re-register that Toyota with the DMV, too. Oh well, they'd be careful not to get a ticket so the previous owner wouldn't get blamed and get wise to that one. Even used Matt as a cutout to buy the car. Matt sort of ran a side business trading in used cars and refurbishing them. But surely The Three Amigos had missed something they are kind of old. Somehow it sounds like The Three Amigos had read so much about terrorism in the papers or heard so much on the news that they were planning on becoming terrorists themselves. Anyway, now that everything was prepared, Ron and Clarence were having second thoughts. They got together and talked about it and agreed to confront Gary.

"How's it going, Gar-Bear?" Ron asked.

"How's what going?" Gary asked back.

"It was just another way to say hi," Ron explained, "But since were on the subject, how are the preparations going?"

"What preparations?"

“Our mission to take out the bad guys,” Ron replied.

“Yeah, you know, Gary your idea to hunt down what you call illegal aliens and kill them,” Clarence bolstered Ron.

“My idea?” Gary retorted, “Where did you ever get the idea that it was my idea?”

“Well Ron said,” Clarence started to say.

“What did you say Ronald?” Gary demanded.

“Butthead,” Ron replied.

“You’re right Ron, opinions are like buttheads, everyone seems to have one,” Gary chuckled. “We’re ready to go fellas, unless you came to chicken out on me.”

Right about then, Ron was ready to make that pucker, pucker, pucker chicken sound, but thought better of it. “So tell me Gar, what’s the first target?”

“Van Nuys.”

“Care to be a little more specific?” Ron asked.

“Well...” Gary said, “If you have the address where the next drive by shooting is going to take place, we’ll go there. Otherwise, I figured to park the Toyota in the general area where I have all of those red pins and just wait for something to go down.”

“This isn’t a deer hunting trip,” Clarence snapped. “I suppose that you just expect the bad guys to come driving up to us, huh?”

“You’re pretty smart for an old guy,” Gary acknowledged.

They put on the gloves, loaded the shotguns slug-00-slug-00, etc. and put the guns in cases in the trunk. Chris had rigged the back seat so that ½ would fold down, giving the guy in back immediate access to the guns. It wouldn’t do for them to get busted on the way to commit the murders on a gun violation after all. Not with Gary being a patron member of the NRA, Ron buying a 5-year membership at a time and Clarence believing that the ‘NRA’ stood for the National Recovery Act. (FDR) It’s about 48 miles from Gary’s house to that neighborhood in Van Nuys, give or take a couple of yards. They made it in just over 1½ hours, Clarence was driving and Clarence never drove fast. The date was the day that would live in infamy and it was cold in Palmdale.

By the way, that neighborhood in Van Nuys, who do you think lived there? Did someone say Illegal Aliens as in people who might have entered the US without the benefit of a passport, etc.? There you go. Coincidence, I assure you. Highest crime rate in the San

Fernando Valley. Legal aliens lived there too, it isn't a nice neighborhood, but the rent is cheap.

The Three Amigos – Vigilantes – Chapter 4 – First Blood

“The murder rate rose nearly 11 percent last year in California’s largest cities and counties, an increase officials say may be attributable to gang violence and a waning economy. The largest cities and counties reported 1,842 killings from January through December 2002 – 179 more than in 2001, according to preliminary figures from the state attorney general’s office. In Los Angeles, the most populous city, crime was up 1.8 percent overall and there were 653 homicides, a jump of 11.1 percent. Many recent killings in Los Angeles have been linked to gang violence. Police Chief William J. Bratton, a former New York police commissioner, has said he would make fighting gangs a priority.”

So there they were, being inconspicuous. Yeah right, 2 old white guys and a black guy in a Toyota in the middle of a Hispanic neighborhood late at night. Everyone probably thought they were some senior undercover cops or something because nothing went down. It got to be about 2am and Clarence suggested that the night was a bust.

“I agree with Clarence, Gary,” Ron insisted, “Let’s call it a night.”

From the back seat, Gary reluctantly agreed but told Clarence to swing by a 7/11 to get a coke to keep him awake. Not from the caffeine, but from scratching the hives the coke was sure to cause. Clarence spotted a 7/11 and started to pull into the parking lot. Timing is everything, that 7/11 was a favorite place to rob and this idiot backing out of the door had a gun. Gary grabbed for 2 shotguns and hissed for Clarence to slowdown, but keep rolling. He handed Ron a weapon and they popped that dude with the gun real good. Clarence just sped up a little when the shots rang out and kept right on trucking to Palmdale.

“We should get suppressors for these shotguns,” Ron said on the way back to Palmdale.

“The Shotgun Reflex Suppressors have a perforated barrel extension tube inside its body running all the way through it, which will keep both shot and slugs from colliding suppressor elements. Although the tube is unchoked, the perforations perform the same effect as a choke by braking outer shots, making the suppressor about equal to a $\frac{3}{4}$ choke with shots,” Gary explained. “The limitations with suppressing shotguns are: 1 – With standard supersonic ammo the flight noise of shot is so high, that the suppressed noise is only 5 - 6 dB lower than as unsuppressed. If one gets or can load subsonic ammo, the noise reduction is quite enough for effective hearing protection. 2 – Only single barrel shotguns can be suppressed with reasonable amount of work. 3 – Suppressor affects balance and sight line of the shotgun.”

“Oh really?” Ron replied, “What did you copy that from?”

“The Reflex site dummy,” Gary explained. “So it wouldn’t do any good to suppress a shotgun, even though we could.”

“Did you kill him?” Clarence asked.

“No,” Gary replied,.

“Not that,” Clarence said, “That guy back there. Did you kill him?”

“Ronald, did you hit him?” Gary asked.

“At that range?” Ron replied, “No way I missed.”

“Slugs or 00?” Gary asked.

“Uh, 00, right in the chest,” Ron replied.

“I hit him too,” Gary said, “Guess I aimed a little high because it almost took his head off. I just love that 00 buck. By the way Clarence, I expect he’s dead with that much buckshot in him. Ronald, you’d better give me the shotgun back unless you’re expecting to shoot it out with the CHP.”

Gary returned the shotguns to the trunk. When they got home, they unloaded the guns, tossed the 4 remaining 00 rounds from the two boxes and returned the slugs to their factory boxes. They also put their ski masks in the laundry to be washed in case there was any gunshot residue on them. By this time, it was going on 4am and they decided to put on a pot of coffee and wait for the 6am newscast. I guess that they wanted to confirm the guy was dead. It was the opening story on the 6am newscast. It was another gang-style drive-by shooting but with a twist. The victim was a guy who had just held up the 7/11 that he was shot in front of. He’d only gotten \$22. They couldn’t show the body, and made a big point of it. The guy was cut to ribbons. Apparently the only thing bothering the cops was that gang bangers didn’t usually use shotguns.

After the sun came up, Gar-Bear took a bottle of whiteout and painted a second line on the back of the cross over Missy’s grave. You couldn’t see the white on white line, but they were there and Gary could feel the little ridge. Ron and Clarence left and they agreed to skip a night to rest up before the next trip. All in all, it had been a good night’s work. This stakeout thing hadn’t worked so hot, so they try something different next time. It was a 2 Xanax night for old Gar-Bear, too.

Los Angeles...

Detectives from the Van Nuys Division were investigating the drive-by. The clerk hadn’t seen the car (a lie) and he wasn’t sure what the passengers looked like (a lie). They were wearing ski masks, he said (true). What the clerk didn’t tell the cops was that there were two white guys and by the looks of their builds, they were at least middle aged. He wasn’t sure, but it almost appeared to him that the driver might have been black; he could see the driver’s hands. The irony of the shooting made it newsworthy. It got some

play on the noon news and the 6pm news. The dead guy's gun had been identified as a gun taken in a home burglary. But as I said, the cops had no leads and for some reason, that clerk didn't seem to have been too observant. They chalked that up to his being scared.

Palmdale...

Gary didn't get up until 5pm. He wondered what time Ron and Clarence had rolled out. He got some coffee, did his meds, and sat down to watch the news on TV. The media was having a field day with the shooting. They all seemed to be focusing on the robber getting shot and the irony of the situation. They'd pestered the LAPD until they issued a statement that admitted that they were short on leads in this instance. However, an eyewitness had seen the car and they were looking for a non-descript older model off-white Toyota sedan. Gary decided it was time to paint the car because the cops claimed that the car had a distinguishing feature and he remember the primered, unpainted door panel. Chris painted his own racecar, so they ended up with a non-descript red Toyota. That forced them to put the next trip off for two days. Chris painted the door panel to match and then, when it dried, had used a type of paint on the car that was water-soluble. He told Gary that if push came to shove, they could pull into a self-service car wash and use the pressure nozzle to wash off that coat of paint.

Ed Gein. Ever heard the name? The wife says I saw a TV show about him, but I don't remember it at all. How about Leatherface (Texas Chainsaw Massacre) or Norman Bates (Psycho) or Buffalo Bill (Silence of the Lambs) or films like "Maniac", "Three on a Meathook", and "Deranged". To one extent or another, all of those stories were based on Ed Gein. Speaking of which, what was the first movie about Hannibal Lecter? 'Silence of the Lambs', right? Wrong. It was called *Manhunter* and starred a young William Petersen later of *CSI* fame. The movie was based on Thomas Harris's novel *Red Dragon: The Search for Hannibal Lecter*.

The Three Amigos kept that old Toyota garaged in a rented garage and those shotguns in the trunk. TV had lost interest in the story and they were ready to try it one more time. So, on the 11th of December, they headed to Van Nuys a second time. They discussed what they were going to do for the entire 1½-hour drive, but couldn't agree on anything except that the stakeout was a bust and that they'd cruise around until someone came up with a good idea. Same setup as last time with Clarence driving, Ron in the passenger seat and Gar-Bear in back because if Gary had been in the passenger seat he'd have been backseat driving. But, in the backseat he couldn't see out so good and kept his mouth shut.

Cruising wasn't proving to be too productive either. That is until Gary finally remembered the scanner he'd borrowed from Chris and preset to the Van Nuys Division radio frequencies. The cops have lights and sirens to help them get to the scene quickly. All The Three Amigos had was a souped up Toyota and they didn't dare speed. At 1:17am a call came over the radio of a robbery in progress about a block away from where they were. Clarence sped up to 35 and they beat the cops by a few minutes. Clarence rolled

into the liquor store parking lot and turned off his lights. Gary handed Ron a shotgun and they poked the barrels out the window. On this trip, they had loaded the shotguns 00-00-slug-00-00-slug-slug-00.

Say I'll bet I've never told you about old Ron and shotguns, have I? Ron preferred auto loaders. Had a lot of them over his lifetime. Every one of them jammed on him. And, it wasn't poor maintenance either, but maybe just a streak of bad luck. So, when Gary bought a pump, Ron decided to go along with the program. And Clarence had just wanted to be like the others. Anyway, Clarence was creeping along in the parking lot about ½ mile per hour when the two bad guys came flying out of that liquor store and came right to them. Ron and Gary each fired 3 rounds, hitting with the buckshot, but probably missing with the slugs. Clarence just sped up to 5mph and kept on going. When he hit the street, he pushed the car to 5 under the speed limited and putted away. The Three Amigos could hear the sirens in the background, but they were a couple of blocks from the liquor store by that time.

Ron handed the Mossberg to Gary and he slipped them into the cases in the trunk and flipped up the seat. On the way back to Palmdale, they discussed their shots and decided that they'd probably gotten the 2 would be thieves. They got home a lot earlier, garaged the Toyota and headed home to sleep. Ron said he'd clean the shotguns and dispose of the shell casings and extra shells later that day. Clarence took the ski masks for Lucy to wash.

The LA Times carried an article below the fold titled *Vigilantes Strike Again* the next day, but they always were a day late anyway. The local channels were, however, ablaze with the story. The robbers were dead, but not mangled this time. The Vigilantes had used shotguns again. KCAL, channel 9, had the best coverage. Say did you know that Disney owned KCAL until they bought ABC? Had to sell the station off because the ABC purchase had included KABC, channel 7 and the FCC is funny about those things. Sharon still worked for Disney at the time. The LAPD had labeled The Three Amigos as serial killers, but didn't have a clue. Guess those shell catchers on the shotguns had been a good idea after all, huh? One of the anchors on KCAL had even made an off-handed reference to Paul Kersey and then had been forced to explain who Paul Kersey was. Got it all wrong, too. Referred to *Death Hunt*, another Bronson movie also starring Lee Marvin as the Mountie.

You know about the media right? Half of them labeled The Three Amigos as *The Vigilantes* and the other half called them *The Death Wish Killers*. The LAPD wasn't amused. They had a description of the car again, but Chris had already power washed the paint off the car and Ron had cleaned the shotguns. As soon as the car dried, Chris was going to paint it, one more time. Chris had it all figured out since before they'd even done the first shooting, but Chris wasn't the talkative sort. He didn't even say anything to Patti, knowing that the entire town would know 6 hours later. But, Patti wasn't so dumb she hadn't already figured it out, too. Contrary to her very nature, she didn't say a word. Dick asked Chris why he was repainting that Toyota again and Chris said that the guy couldn't make up his mind on the color. So, he said, he was using a water-soluble paint

until the guy could and he was making good money repainting the thing. Dick wasn't fooled for a minute and he stood on Chris's driveway looking at Gary and Sharon's house shaking his head. But no one said a word for fear of being overheard.

The LAPD's forensic lab had checked the wadding removed from the wounds against the wadding from the first shooting. About all they knew was that 2 people, probably middle aged men, had shot the 3 bad guys with 12-pellet 00 buckshot from different lots and different manufacturers. The first shooting had been with Remington ammo and the second with Winchester. They could tell from the pellets and wadding, etc. How many companies manufacture 12-pellet 00 buckshot in the 2¾" shells? More than you think. S & B does and so does Federal, but apparently Wolf doesn't. I didn't know that, I've only ever seen the Remington. But, I don't get out much. Now days, my fingers do the walking on the Internet.

Say, what do you really know about old Gar-Bear? He prefers single-action revolvers, lever action rifles and 18" barreled 12-gauge shotguns with 3" chambers. They don't seem to make the short barrels in the 3½" chambers or he'd probably have one. Had his 20" barrel bored out from 2¾" to 3" back in 1979, but going from 3" to 3½" might be pushing the envelope. He didn't know, to tell the truth. Well, maybe he could buy a barrel with a 3½" chamber and have it shortened to 18", but, that would probably leave a trail right to his doorstep. Why 3½"? 12-gauge 18-pellet 00 buckshot, that's why. I'll bet that stuff kicks like a mule! And, if you don't know that the only military type rifle that Gary really likes is the Springfield Armory M1A, you haven't been reading Gary's stories. There is only 1 other gun that Gary would consider owning, a M1911 style .45ACP, but he can't really work the slide with his hands despite Fleataxi's best efforts to explain how he can do it.

At one time, Gary's gun collection included Winchester model 94's in 22LR, 22WRM, 30-30 and .375 Winchester. Plus a Ruger Bearcat, a convertible Single Six, 2 Blackhawk's-one convertible to 9mm, and a Super Blackhawk. Also a pair of Marlin's, the .357 and the .44. Had a pair of 870's, 12-gauge and 20-gauge plus a pair of 20" barreled 870 with mag extensions. And some other stuff thrown in for good measure. There was a Python with a 4" barrel and a second with the 2½ barrel among others. One of those POS Armalite AR-7's, too. Had? Yep. Long, sad story, it would purely break your heart. Oops, forgot the pair of Mini-14's, one with a Butler Creek folding stock and a flash hider (blued) and the stainless Mini-14 with the beautiful stock. One 30-round stainless mag and 10 30-round blued mags that functioned flawlessly. 20,000 assorted rounds of ammo, too. But, them that can do and them that can't teach. Never, ever sell your guns; I don't care what the circumstances are! Even if you end up a millionaire, they'll probably change the law and you'll never be able to replace them. A word to the wise... All true, so help me, except the millionaire part. While we're at it, don't give your radios, generator, compressor and tools to Chris; you'll never get them back. You do have to give Gary credit; when he screwed up, he did it BIG TIME.

The Three Amigos – Vigilantes – Chapter 5 – One Tin Soldier

*Listen, children, to a story
That was written long ago,
'Bout a kingdom on a mountain
And the valley-folk below.*

*On the mountain was a treasure
Buried deep beneath the stone,
And the valley-people swore
They'd have it for their very own.*

*Go ahead and hate your neighbor,
Go ahead and cheat a friend.
Do it in the name of Heaven,
You can justify it in the end.
There won't be any trumpets blowing
Come the judgment day,
On the bloody morning after....
One tin soldier rides away.*

*So the people of the valley
Sent a message up the hill,
Asking for the buried treasure,
Tons of gold for which they'd kill.*

*Came an answer from the kingdom,
"With our brothers we will share
All the secrets of our mountain,
All the riches buried there."*

*Now the valley cried with anger,
"Mount your horses! Draw your sword!"
And they killed the mountain-people,
So they won their just reward.*

*Now they stood beside the treasure,
On the mountain, dark and red.
Turned the stone and looked beneath it...
"Peace on Earth" was all it said.*

*Go ahead and hate your neighbor,
Go ahead and cheat a friend.
Do it in the name of Heaven,
You can justify it in the end.
There won't be any trumpets blowing*

*Come the judgment day,
On the bloody morning after....
One tin soldier rides away.*

(Repeat Chorus)

The lessons of a lifetime, all bitter, none sweet. Gary probably drank up that gun collection or smoked it away, maybe both. Chasing the bimbos had cost him his radios, generator, compressor and tools. Wrong-headed thinking, if you get my drift.

On Saturday, October 9, 2004 around 9:45am PDT, Gary had turned on the TV and surfed to FOX News. FOX was carrying a story about illegal aliens. 2.2 million in California, the highest of any state. The story was about tunnels, or at least the portion Gary caught. Very interesting. Did you see the broadcast? The commentator, maybe the guy in LA had said that interviews with Méxicans on the other side of the border revealed that not everyone using the tunnels were Méxicans. "Very interesting and scary," Gary thought. "Maybe I can get a story out of that." It was the FOX Weekend Live broadcast with Tony Snow, a rebroadcast from 9/7/02. According to Yahoo, the same segment was going to be re-aired on 10/16/04 at 9:00am PDT. Don't you just love the Internet? It has so much useless information.

Contrast that story with this story from CNN's website on the same date. "The Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, home to the endangered Sonoran pronghorn, has been damaged by excessive human presence, according to a report by Defenders of Wildlife. The report calls for construction of a vehicle barrier on the southern edge of the refuge along the Méxican border. *The border issue is convoluted, and very complex*, he said. *The solution to the border problems is not on the border; it's in Washington, DC, and México City. So we're just putting a Band-Aid on the wound to stanch the blood. It's a difficult situation.*"

But, Gary had taken a shower and by the time he was clean, his mind was blank. Associative memory, huh? What's going to trigger a recall of that bit of trivia? He'd missed the second show and still didn't have the whole story. But, he did have time to put two more of those white on white lines on the back of Missy's cross. But, he'd concluded that only Democrats and environmentalists worked for CNN.

Pickings were pretty lean in Van Nuys, so the fellas decided to take Fleataxi's advice and move their activities to East LA. Maybe they would run into Cheech and Chong. And, Gary only wanted one more line on the cross; he had bigger fish to fry. And what was the problem with 12-pellet 00 buck? 12 is 9 plus 3. 3 is $\frac{1}{3}$ of 9 so that means that a 12-pellet buckshot shell has 133% of the number of pellets of a 9-pellet shell. If the store has both for the same price, why buy nine. Now, if you reload, you might only want to reload 9-pellets, but hey, what's the big deal?

They might call Gary TOM on the website, but he was no Tom Laughlin. Both Laughlin and his wife, Dolores Taylor, had starred in a 1971 movie. You knew it right? She co-

starred in and co-wrote several of the *Billy Jack* movies with her lifetime partner and husband, Tom Laughlin. Quite a song wasn't it, that *One Tin Soldier*? The song was originally recorded by *The Original Caste*. The movie soundtrack was performed by Jinx Dawson of Coven. Now, I liked that movie, and only learned later that Tom and Delores wrote it, he directed it, and co-produced it. That's a real family project.

East LA was scheduled for December 10th; Gary didn't believe that *Never on a Sunday* crap. Besides if it went down after midnight, it would be Monday. Ron drove so it only took 1½-hours this time, but it was further. No Cheech and Chong, but they did see some guy who looked like Paul Rodriguez (the comic). And, since Gary only wanted a *single* this time out, they had to pass up on about a dozen opportunities to take out groups. Finally, Gary saw some guy walking down the street and hollered, *Chinga tu madre* at the fella. He whipped out a gun in response to the insult and Gary shot him 4 times with 00 buck. 12-PELLET 00 buck, I'll have you know! On the way back to Palmdale, Gary announced that their hunting days were over.

"Why's that, Gary," Clarence asked. "I feel left out."

"In the first place, that's enough vengeance," Gary explained. "In the second place, I remembered that program on FOX and we have a bigger worry. In the third place, my nose is clogged up and you know how the last trip to the hospital began. So, I'm taking a day or two off to clear my head with Sudafed and then we'll address the bigger worry."

"What's the bigger worry Gar-Bear?" Ron asked.

"Illegal aliens," Gary replied.

"But..." Clarence started to protest.

"And not illegal aliens as I've defined them or illegal aliens in the classical sense," Gary continued. "I saw this program on FOX that was talking about the people sneaking across the border who aren't Hispanics looking for work, but possible terrorists."

"I must have missed that," Ron said. "When was it on?"

"October 9th at 9am," Gary replied. "I just remembered it. I don't like the Mossberg shotguns either, so we're getting rid of them, at least the ones we stole from Big 5. And we'll get Chris to repaint this car and have Matt peddle it off."

"I'd sure hate to throw away a shotgun," Clarence said. "Especially one I'd never fired."

"I didn't say we're throwing them away, partner," Gary chuckled, "We're going to un-steal them."

"Huh?" Ron and Clarence responded in unison.

"I kept the boxes, fellas," Gary said. "We're going to clean them up just like new and return them to Big 5."

Think about it. The shotguns, 2 of them anyway, had only been fired a few times and one, not at all. The way Ron cleaned guns, you couldn't tell the weapon had been fired. And old packrat Gary never threw anything away. Gary even had some gunk he'd bought at K-Mart that dissolved tape residue so there wouldn't even be tape residue on the stocks. And, probably the only thing that Big-5 had done after the theft, assuming they'd discovered it, was to change the locks on the doors. And, by the way, Gar-Bear, that's one hell of an idea you have there. LA is California's most populous city, right? Forget about looking for a needle in a haystack, that's easy by comparison.

But, let's get back to 00 buckshot for a moment. Most of those reduced recoil tactical police rounds only had 8 pellets. Fleataxi had pointed out to Gary that the more lead coming out of the barrel, the greater the recoil. Gary didn't dispute Fleataxi on that issue at all. It really boiled down to a question of philosophy. Apparently cops assumed / planned on needing more than one shot to put their target down. Lower recoil leads to a rapid recovery and a faster, better placed second shot. Gary considered a shotgun to be a close in weapon, much like a pistol or revolver. I'm not saying he was right, just telling you his philosophy. He wasn't really interested in a second shot, but that didn't mean he didn't take one. It was that first shot that counted, in his opinion. This was generally, but not always, the shot that you had time to aim the best.

00 buckshot is available, I do believe, in 8, 9 or 12 pellets in the 2¾" shells. The 3" magnum shells seemed to favor 12 or 15 pellets and the 3½" 18 pellets. Regardless of what one uses, there is always some recoil. If a 3" shell will hold 15 00-pellets, how come a 3½" round will only hold 18 and not 21? Can't they shorten up the wadding or something? I know that $2 \times .33 = .66$ which is more than ½", but still... Man, talk about recoil!

So, you have a 3½" shell with 18-pellets. That's sort of like firing 2 9-pellet rounds at one time, right? Right and if your aim is off... Many would probably argue that's why you want the second shot. Kind of makes you wonder what's the best 00 buckshot load, huh?

Gary believes in the close in use of the shotgun, but what if the target isn't close in? Well now, aren't 18-pellets flying at that distant target better than 8 or 9 or 12 or 15? And if you can reload the 2¾" 9-pellet shells, why can't you figure out how to reload a 3½" shell with 21 pellets? Maybe because they just won't fit? You got me.

Gary marked that 5th white on white line on the back of Missy's cross. The vendetta was over, but the story was just beginning. He was back to worrying about the perceived threat from those terrorists who were sneaking across the border in the tunnels. There was no way in hell they could find them either. But, they could get prepared. The problem was, they didn't have much money. So, they were going to have to prepare on a budget. It would sort of be like taking generic pills; they did the same thing, but cost

less. How much backup power do you really need? Enough for the refrigerators and stoves and the oxygen machine or Nebulizer. 7kw would probably run a whole home, if you didn't have 3 computers running at the same time, including 2 refrigerators, a freezer and the stove. You could live without air conditioning, regardless of what Sharon claimed. 3 computers and a printer ate up 1kw.

The MSRP on those Mossberg shotguns is \$347. So what if they only cost \$220 plus tax? There's always some dope looking for a home defense shotgun and you might just be able to sell them for \$300, saving that uninformed dude \$47 bucks, right? Then you could buy that 870 when Big 5 had it on sale for \$320. And sooner or later, someone would put 5kw or 6kw gasoline generators on sale. Less than perfect? You bet it is. But, it is doable. And a 300-gallon home heating fuel tank will hold gasoline just fine. You'll need a fair amount of PRI-G, but so what? Just remember to shut down the generator when you refill the 5-gallon tank or you'll end up killing yourself like the guy in Florida.

I need to correct an earlier error:

The toxicity of a substance is its potential to cause harm by reaction with body tissues. Measures of toxicity include lethal dose (LD 50) and lethal concentration (LC 50). The LD 50 is the single dose of a substance which when administered to a batch of animals under test kills 50% of them. It is measured in terms of mg of a substance per kg of body weight. Typical degrees of LD toxicity are:

- Extremely toxic 1mg or less
- Highly toxic 1-50 mg
- Moderately toxic 50-500 mg
- Slightly toxic 0.5-5 g
- Practically non-toxic 5-15 g
- Relatively harmless 15g or more

In a similar way, the LC 50 refers to an inhale substance and is the concentration which kills 50% in a stated time. The Ames test is a useful test for carcinogenic substances, which measures the ability of a substance to damage genetic material (DNA) in special strains of bacteria.

The toxic response to a given substance depends on the dose, and this may be demonstrated in an animal's tissues, physiology, biochemistry and behavior. However, with all animal testing there is difficulty in extrapolating these results to men, especially when the animals are tested in conditions to which man is not exposed.

The Three Amigos – Vigilantes – Chapter 6 – The Lament

Abu Nidal Organization (ANO)
Abu Sayyaf Group
Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades
Armed Islamic Group
'Asbat al-Ansar
Aum Shinrikyo
Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA)
Gama'a al-Islamiyya (Islamic Group)
 Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement)
Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HUM)
Hizballah (Party of God)
Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)
Jaish-e-Mohammed (JEM) (Army of Mohammed)
Al-Jihad (Egyptian Islamic Jihad)
Kahane Chai (Kach)
Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)
Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LT) (Army of the Righteous)
Lahskar-i-Jhangvi
Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)
Mujahedin-e Khalq Organization (MEK)
National Liberation Army (ELN)
Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)
Palestine Liberation Front (PLF)
Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)
PFLP-General Command (PFLP-GC)
Al-Qaida
Real IRA
Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)
Revolutionary Nuclei (formerly ELA)
Revolutionary Organization 17 November
Revolutionary People's Liberation Army/Front (DHKP/C)
Salafist Group for Call and Combat (GSPC)
Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso, SL)
United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC)
Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army (CPP/NPA)
Jemaah Islamiya organization (JI)

How come I don't see Haganah, the Irgun and Lehi on that list? Where are Sinn Fein and the other Irish terrorists? There certainly are a lot of Muslim organizations on the list. I remember now, Haganah became the Israeli Defense Forces and the Labor Party; Irgun was also merged into the IDF and became the Likud Party. Lehi was a nasty bunch that also merged into the IDF and the group was outlawed. And the Irish terrorists? Well, which ones, the Catholics or the Protestants? I tried to count the numbers, but ran out of fingers and toes. Finally, I noticed that a lot of the Muslim terrorist organi-

zations aren't listed either. There sure isn't anything new about terrorists, the Irish terrorist organizations have a long history. What is new about terrorism is the consciousness that the US now has of the subject. Still, it seems to be a rather jaded view.

May I suggest that the terrorist organizations that we ought to be worried about are the wanttabe's? al Qaida aka al Qaeda was only formed in 1989. Al Qaeda had ties to other "terrorist organizations that operated under its umbrella," including: the al Jihad group based in Egypt, the Islamic Group, formerly led by Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, and other jihad groups in other countries. "Al Qaeda also forged alliances with the National Islamic Front in Sudan and with representatives of the government of Iran, and its associated terrorist group Hezbollah, for the purpose of working together against their perceived common enemies in the West, particularly the United States."

Why was al Qaeda so successful? Money! Osama bin Laden had a ton of it, giving the organization a lot of instant resources. But it started out as a bunch of wanttabe's. One thing that might separate a newer group of wanttabe's from some of the more readily identified organizations could be a minor difference in philosophy. Maybe the new organization sees things a little bit differently or wants to act a little quicker. Hasn't the US sort of taken the position that all of the Muslim terrorist organizations listed by the State Department are somehow associated with al Qaeda anyway? Or, is that just the news media and their inability to distinguish a rat from a skunk?

Founded in 1978 as a Marxist-Leninist insurgent group primarily composed of Turkish Kurds. The group's goal has been to establish an independent, democratic Kurdish state in the Middle East. In the early 1990s, the PKK moved beyond rural-based insurgent activities to include urban terrorism. Turkish authorities captured Chairman Abdullah Ocalan in Kenya in early 1999; the Turkish State Security Court subsequently sentenced him to death. In August 1999, Ocalan announced a "peace initiative," ordering members to refrain from violence and requesting dialogue with Ankara on Kurdish issues. At a PKK Congress in January 2000, members supported Ocalan's initiative and claimed the group now would use only political means to achieve its public goal of improved rights for Kurds in Turkey. In April 2002 at its 8th Party Congress, the PKK changed its name to the Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress (KADEK) and proclaimed a commitment to nonviolent activities in support of Kurdish rights. Despite this pledge, a PKK/KADEK spokesman stated that its armed wing, The People's Defense Force, would not disband or surrender its weapons for reasons of self-defense. In late 2003, the group sought to engineer another political face-lift, renaming the group Kongra-Gel (KGK) and brandishing its "peaceful" intentions, while continuing to commit attacks and refuse disarmament.

The real list of terrorist organizations around the world has 388 organizations as opposed to the State Department's list of 39. It even includes the KKK, the Mau Mau and the Weatherman faction of the SDS. A guy could spend the rest of his life just researching the Muslim terrorist organizations. But, that would leave The Three Amigos sitting there in Palmdale totally unprepared. Let's face it; Gar-Bear is the spiritual leader of The

Three Amigos organization, isn't he? And, if he's on the net, he's not getting prepared and if he doesn't Ron and Clarence probably won't.

At least Clarence won't. Ron sort of went off on his own and started buying guns and ammo after 9/11. Ended up converting his shed to a gunroom complete with 2 gun safes. Bought one hell of a lot of ammo, too. But like so many people, Ron was politically correct. Bought bolt action .223's instead of assault rifles like the Mini-14. I suppose a bolt action .223 beats the hell out of a slingshot, right? One other thing Ronald McDonald did was to buy a lot of guns in obscure calibers. Good plan Ron, what are you going to do when you run out of that high priced ammo, you don't reload per chance? Is that dissent I detect or is it envy? Yes...

Costco carries the Cummings line of generators. They start at \$1,650 for the 6kw portable. Lowe's carries the Troy-Bilt; \$1,100 for a 7.5kw unit. Home Depot carries Coleman portables and Generac home-standby units. Remember, Gar-Bear is a shut-in and if he can't get it in Palmdale or Lancaster, he may be out of luck because Sharon hates to drive to LA. Ah, but there's the Internet.

Now, say you decided on a home standby system. Depending upon the brand, etc. you have to adjust for altitude and temperature. Need 100 amps continuous no matter what? Be sure to deduct about 3.5% to 5% of the rated capacity per 1,000 feet of altitude above 1,000 feet and another 1% to 2.5% for every 10 degrees above 85 degrees F. Be conservative; deduct 10% for altitude (Palmdale is about 3,000 feet) and 5% for temperature (It gets hot in the summer). So, if 100 amps are 85% of what you need, then you'd better get a 120-amp generator, right? That's about 13kw. And, since more is better, you're going to have to buy a 30kw unit so Sharon doesn't get overheated.

Better buy an Onan to keep the squirrels' happy, model RS 30000. And you'll need that Onan automatic transfer panel for fully automatic operation. LP or natural gas? How about both like Gary did that in one of the Three Amigo stories. Did I hear the name John D. Rockefeller mentioned when we got to the cost part? We're on a budget here, remember?

Then there is the warning in the Onan owner's manual that reminds you, "As a California user of these gensets, please be aware that unauthorized modifications or replacement of fuel, exhaust, air intake, or speed control system components that affect engine emissions are prohibited. Unauthorized modification, removal or replacement of the genset label is prohibited. You should carefully review Operator (Owner), Installation and other manuals and information you receive with your genset. If you are unsure that the installation, use, maintenance or service of your genset is authorized, you should seek assistance from an approved Onan engine or genset dealer."

And, how come you can buy the RS 12000 for 60% of MSRP, but the dealer wants 100% of MSRP for the RS15000? No kidding. Maybe Gary ought to move back to LA down near the Civic Center so that when the bomb goes off he doesn't have to worry about standby power. Or, you could buy the Coleman 15kw unit, it's on sale. But wait,

California won't issue you a permit for a Coleman 15kw system. In the end, Gary bought the RS 30000 because it was dual fuel, LP and natural gas, plus a bottle of Tylenol for his headache. And if the air conditioner wouldn't work, Sharon could use a fan. I know, Fleataxi, there's a downside to research, too!

Living in California has its downsides, too. Ain't no dealer going to do that modification so the system runs on LP and natural gas that was described in an earlier story. So, you have to break the law and do it yourself. It seems like California just naturally makes lawbreakers out of everyone. No wonder so many people wise up and move out when they retire. Ever been to Mesa, Az? You can tell the people from California by their 6' high fences. Think I'm joking? Check it out. And, Reno and Lost Wages are being over-run by retiring Californians, hell Henderson is SRO.

But wait, we haven't talked about the arsenal, yet. You can get a California legal M1A for \$1,300. What do they cost in other states, 1,000? MSRP is the minimum price you pay in most places in LA County for a firearm. Most California legal AR's and FAL's and the like have fixed magazines. And, assuming you could change the lower receiver, the gun would become illegal. So, I guess you buy Mini-14's and CA legal M1A's and modify them. But, you'll probably have to use a straw man and that's illegal. And, just importing the high capacity mags is illegal.

So there you are with an illegal generator, illegal rifles and illegal mags; you might as go all the way and buy some suppressors. And that SS109 ammo is probably illegal too because it's armor penetrating. The Berkey water filter is illegal, too. Don't let that bother you, you're probably going to prison for life for the genset mod. Remember when there were 2 models of cars, CA and the ones for the others states? Eventually, the manufacturers' ended up just building the CA models.

Why are you complaining, Gar-Bear, it was your bright idea to move to California? Yes, but that was 22 years ago and California changed. So, move! Well, Amy and Lorrie, Sharon's only children live in California. And, Sharon doesn't want to move back to Iowa because of the snow and the fact that her kids are in California.

Lament – a crying out in grief.

Lamentable – that is to be regretted or lamented.

Like I said, them that can do and them that can't teach. I can't, so I teach. It doesn't matter if what I tell you is right or wrong as long as it gets you to think, although, I try to be right.

I may be back with another story, or maybe not, I'm not sure. There isn't much more to say on the subject of preparedness anyway. Well, there is one thing I ought to say, preparedness is a state of mind. You can have all the whistles and toots, but if you're thinking is off, they won't help you. Buy what you can and use what you buy.

Glocks rule, but the kingdom is small. But why not, the whole world is made of plastic anyway.

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